

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION SERVICES (HPES)
351 North Mt. View Avenue, Second Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0010
(909) 387-6280 ♦ (800) 782-4262 ♦ (909) 387-6359 TDD ♦ Fax (909) 387-0102

JAMES A. FELTEN, MPA
Public Health Director

ERIC K. FRYKMAN, MD, MPH, MBA
Health Officer

CONTACT:
James Felten
Public Health Director
(909) 387-9146

November 18, 2004
NR # 04-92

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County Emergency Services Conduct Bioterrorism Drill

San Bernardino, CA – San Bernardino County public health officials and other emergency responders participated in a statewide drill involving a simulated bioterrorism attack in California today. The drill, led by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority in conjunction with the California Department of Health Services, tested the state's ability to respond to a massive release of botulism into food sources. Many of the state's emergency service agencies were called into action during the drill including the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Department of Homeland Security and Department of Mental Health. All California counties were invited to participate. This drill will further the state's efforts to plan and prepare for a possible bioterrorism event.

San Bernardino County Public Health Officer, Dr. Eric Frykman says this type of exercise is critical to keeping the county's response system prepared. "We have put resources into training and preparing our emergency and public health services for this type of event. Participating in such an exercise increases our ability to respond rapidly and keep the public as safe as possible."

- more -

MARK UFFER
County Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
BILL POSTMUS.....First District DENNIS HANSBERGER.....Third District
PAUL BIANE.....Second District PATTI AGUIAR.....Fourth District
CLIFFORD YOUNG.....Fifth District

The symptoms and severity of illness brought on by botulism exposure tested the capacity of county medical services. “Hospital and clinic staff have been preparing for this kind of sudden, heavy demand on services. This drill gave them an opportunity to see first hand how such an incident would impact us.”

The response to this drill will demonstrate the state government’s ability to work with emergency response centers throughout the state, access and transmit information rapidly to the public, ensure the integration of medical and health operations and coordinate laboratory activities. An evaluation of the exercise will help determine areas that need improvement and highlight activities that are working well.

###